



SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Monday, 6th November, 2023 at 11.30 am

Please note that there will **not** be a pre-meeting for Scrutiny Board members.

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr J Akhtar	- Little London and Woodhouse
Cllr B Anderson	- Adel and Wharfedale
Cllr S Golton (Chair)	- Rothwell
Cllr P Grahame	- Cross Gates and Whinmoor
Cllr A Hannan	- Headingley and Hyde Park
Cllr N Harrington	- Wetherby
Cllr A Khan	- Burmantofts and Richmond Hill
Cllr A Maloney	- Beeston and Holbeck
Cllr A McCluskey	- Farnley and Wortley
Cllr A Rontree	- Kirkstall
Cllr S Seary	- Pudsey
Cllr P Stables	- Wetherby
Cllr J Tudor	- Killingbeck and Seacroft
Vacancy	
Vacancy	

To Note: Please do not attend the meeting in person if you have symptoms of Covid-19 and please follow current public health advice to avoid passing the virus onto other people.

Note to observers of the meeting: We strive to ensure our public committee meetings are inclusive and accessible for all. If you are intending to observe a public meeting in-person, please advise us in advance of any specific access requirements that we need to take into account by email (FacilitiesManagement@leeds.gov.uk). Please state the name, date and start time of the committee meeting you will be observing and include your full name and contact details.

To remotely observe this meeting, please click on the 'To View Meeting' link which will feature on the meeting's webpage (linked below) ahead of the meeting. The webcast will become available at the commencement of the meeting.

[Scrutiny Board \(Environment, Housing & Communities\) - 6 November 2023 - Call-In](#)

Principal Scrutiny Adviser:
Rebecca Atherton
Tel: (0113) 37 88642

A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded).</p> <p>(* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).</p>	
2			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- <p>RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p>No exempt items have been identified.</p>	

3

LATE ITEMS

To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)

4

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To disclose or draw attention to any interests in accordance with Leeds City Council's 'Councillor Code of Conduct'.

5

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.

6

CALL IN BRIEFING PAPER

5 - 10

To consider a report from the Head of Democratic Services advising the Scrutiny Board on the procedural aspects of Calling In the decision.

7

10.4(3)

FUTURE OF SIX HIGH RISE AND RESIDENT REHOUSING - BAILEY AND BROOKLANDS TOWERS, RAMSHEAD HEIGHTS, LEAFIELD TOWERS, RAYNVILLE COURT AND GRANGE

11 - 70

To consider a report from the Head of Democratic Services, which presents background information relating to an Executive Board decision that has been 'called in' in accordance with procedures set out within the Council's Constitution.

The original decision was taken by the Executive Board on 18 October 2023 and relates to *Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange.*

(Please note that Appendix C to the Executive Board report has been designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3))

8

OUTCOME OF THE CALL IN

To determine whether to release the decision for implementation or recommend to the decisionmaker that the decision should be reconsidered.

9

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) will take place on **7 December at 10.30am**. There will be a private pre-meeting for all Scrutiny Board members at **10am**.

THIRD PARTY RECORDING

Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts on the front of this agenda.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties – code of practice

- a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.
- b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.

Call In Briefing Paper

Date: 6 November 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, an Executive Board decision has been Called In. The background papers to this decision are set out as a separate agenda item and appropriate witnesses have been invited to give supporting evidence.

This report advises the Scrutiny Board on the procedural aspects of Calling In the decision.

In particular, the Board is advised that the Call In is specific to the Executive Board decision in question and issues outside of this decision, including other related decisions, may not be considered as part of the Board's decision regarding the outcome of the Call In.

Recommendations

- a) The Scrutiny Board is asked to note the contents of this report and to adopt the procedure as detailed within it.

What is this report about?

- 1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, an Executive Board decision has been Called In. This report advises the Scrutiny Board on the procedural aspects of Calling In the decision.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The Call-In process provides the facility for the Scrutiny Board to require a decision taker to reconsider a decision within a specified time period. This is a separate function from the Scrutiny Board's ability to review decisions already taken and implemented. The eligibility of an Executive Board decision for Call In is indicated in the minutes of the relevant meeting.
- 3 The Board is advised that the Call In is specific to the decision considered by the Executive Board and issues outside of this decision, including other related decisions, may not be considered as part of the Board's decision regarding the outcome of the Call In.

Reviewing the decision

- 4 Due to the unique nature of Call In, which includes the requirement to conclude the meeting with a recommendation in one sitting, it is important that the meeting has a managed framework. The Scrutiny Board is therefore recommended to adopt the following process:
 - The lead signatory of the Call-In request will outline their reasons for calling in the decision, defining their concerns and explaining what remedial action they wish to see. If the Chair has agreed in advance that they may be accompanied by other witnesses, these witnesses will also be given the opportunity to briefly outline their concerns in relation to the decision in question.
 - Members of the Scrutiny Board will ask any questions and points of clarification.
 - At this point, the Members who signed the Call-In request and any accompanying witnesses will leave the witness table.
 - The Executive Member(s) and/or officer(s) who are representing the decision maker will be invited to join the witness table.
 - The representatives of the decision maker will respond to the issues raised by the Call-In request.
 - Members of the Scrutiny Board will ask any questions and points of clarification.
 - If necessary, this stage may involve further questioning by Board members of the witnesses in support of the Call-In request. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no provision for the witnesses to cross-question one another.
 - Once Members of the Scrutiny Board have completed their questioning of witnesses, the representatives of the decision maker will leave the witness table.
 - A representative on behalf of each of the parties to the Call In will be invited to join the witness table to sum up. The representative of the decision maker will be invited to sum up first if they wish to do so. Following this, the representative of the signatories to the Call-In request will be invited to sum up having heard the discussion.
 - The Scrutiny Board will then proceed to make its decision in relation to the Call In.

- 5 Having reviewed the decision, the Scrutiny Board will need to agree what action it wishes to take. In doing so, it may pursue one of two courses of action as set out below:

Option 1- Release the decision for implementation

- 6 Having reviewed this decision, the Scrutiny Board may decide to release it for implementation. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option, the decision will be immediately released for implementation and the decision may not be Called In again.

Option 2 - Recommend that the decision be reconsidered

- 7 The Scrutiny Board may decide to recommend to the decision maker that the decision be reconsidered. If the Scrutiny Board chooses this option a report will be submitted to the decision maker.
- 8 In the case of an Executive Board decision, the report of the Scrutiny Board will be prepared within three working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting and submitted to the Executive Board. Any report of the Scrutiny Board will be referred to the next Executive Board meeting for consideration.
- 9 In reconsidering the decision and associated Scrutiny Board report, the Executive Board may vary the decision or confirm its original decision. In either case, this will form the basis of the final decision and will not be subject to any further call-in.

Failure to agree one of the above options

- 10 If the Scrutiny Board, for any reason, does not agree one of the above courses of action at this meeting, then Option 1 will be adopted by default, i.e. the decision will be released for implementation with no further recourse to Call In.

Formulating the Board's report

- 11 If the Scrutiny Board decides to release the decision for implementation (Option 1), then the Scrutiny Support Unit will process the necessary notifications and no further action is required by the Board.
- 12 If the Scrutiny Board wishes to recommend that the decision be reconsidered (Option 2), then it will be necessary for the Scrutiny Board to agree a report setting out its recommendation together with any supporting commentary.
- 13 Due to the tight timescales within which a decision Call In must operate, it is important that the principles of the Scrutiny Board's report be agreed at the meeting.
- 14 If the Scrutiny Board decides to pursue Option 2, it is proposed that there be a short adjournment during which the Chair, in conjunction with the Scrutiny Support Service, should prepare a brief statement proposing the Scrutiny Board's draft recommendations and

supporting commentary. Upon reconvening, the Scrutiny Board will be invited to amend/agree this statement as appropriate.

15 This statement will then form the basis of the Scrutiny Board's report (together with factual information as to details of the Called In decision, lists of witnesses, evidence considered, Members involved in the Call-In process etc).

16 The Scrutiny Board is advised that there is no provision within the Call-In procedure for the submission of a Minority Report.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

17 The background papers to the decision under consideration will make any relevant references to the council's three Key Pillars.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

18 Prior to submitting a Call In, a nominated signatory must first contact the relevant Director/report author or Executive Member to discuss their concerns and their reasons for wanting to call in the decision. Part of this discussion must include the Member ascertaining the financial implications of requesting a Call In. The details of this discussion should be referenced on the Call-In Request Form.

19 The background papers to this decision will make reference to any internal or external consultation processes that have been undertaken in relation to the decision.

What are the resource implications?

20 The additional papers appended to later items on this agenda detail any significant resource and financial implications linked to the decision

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

21 The additional papers appended to later items on this agenda detail any significant risks linked to the decision

What are the legal implications?

22 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

23 The additional papers appended to later items on this agenda detail any significant legal implications linked to the decision

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

24 A Call In is progressed in line with the procedures set out in section 4B of the Council Constitution - [Executive Decision-Making Procedures](#).

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 25 Where a decision is released, a call in release form is sent to the relevant director to confirm that the decision can be implemented.
- 26 Where a decision is referred for reconsideration the Scrutiny Officer is required to prepare a report within three working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting, which will be submitted to the Executive Board, Health and Well-Being Board or senior Officer as appropriate.
- 27 In the case of the Executive Board the report will then be taken to the next public meeting. This will be considered alongside the original decision – with that decision either re-confirmed or a new decision taken. The outcome of that process – be it a re-confirmation or a new decision – cannot be subject to future call-in.
- 28 In the case of an officer decision, if the Decision Taker wishes to confirm the original decision, that decision shall be submitted to the next Executive Board meeting.
- 29 If the original decision was taken by the Health and Wellbeing Board or an officer, and the relevant Director is of the view that the original decision should be confirmed, but that urgency prevents them from submitting the decision to Executive Board;
- The Director shall obtain the approval of the relevant Executive Board Member before implementation;
 - Details of the Executive Member approval, together with reasons of urgency will be included in the new delegated decision form; and
 - The Director and relevant Executive Board Member will also be required to attend and give their reasoning to the next available meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Board

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None

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Call In: Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange

Date: 6 November 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report presents the background to a decision, which has been Called In in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Recommendations

- a) The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities) is asked to review this decision and to determine whether to either:
- Release the decision for implementation
 - Recommend to the decision-maker that the decision should be reconsidered

What is this report about?

- 1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, an Executive Board decision has been Called In. The decision was taken at the [Executive Board meeting on 18 October 2023](#) and relates to minute 49 - Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange.
- 2 Leeds City Council's Call-In processes are set out within part 4 (Rules of Procedure) of the Council's constitution. Section 4B relates to [Executive Decision-Making Procedures](#) with call-in procedures detailed in paragraphs 5.1.2 to 5.1.5.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3 The Call-In process provides the facility for the Scrutiny Board to require a decision taker to reconsider a decision within a specified timeframe.
- 4 The Scrutiny Board is advised that the Call In is specific to the Executive Board decision and issues outside of this decision, including other related decisions, may not be considered as part of the Board's decision regarding the outcome of the Call In.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 5 Prior to submitting a Call In, a nominated signatory must first contact the relevant officer and/or Executive Member to discuss their concerns and their reasons for wanting to call in the decision. Part of this discussion must include the Member ascertaining the financial implications of requesting a Call In. The detail of this discussion is referenced on the Call-In Request Form, which is appended to this report.
- 6 Appropriate Members and officers have been invited to attend the meeting to explain the decision and respond to questions from members of the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities).

What are the resource implications?

- 7 The appended Executive Board decision and the associated report reference resource and financial implications linked to the decision.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 8 The appended report references any risk management issues linked to the decision.

What are the legal implications?

- 9 The appended report references any legal implications linked to the decision.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 10 A Call In is progressed in line with the procedures set out in section 4B of the Council Constitution - [Executive Decision-Making Procedures](#).

How will success be measured?

- 11 A Call In is progressed in line with the procedures set out in section 4B of the Council Constitution - [Executive Decision-Making Procedures](#).

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 12 Where a decision is released, a call-in release form is sent to the relevant director to confirm that the decision can be implemented.
- 13 Where a decision is referred for reconsideration the Scrutiny Officer is required to prepare a report within three working days of the Scrutiny Board meeting, which will be submitted to the Executive Board, Health and Well-Being Board or senior Officer as appropriate.
- 14 In the case of the Executive Board the report will then be taken to the next public meeting. This will be considered alongside the original decision – with that decision either re-confirmed or a new decision taken. The outcome of that process – be it a re-confirmation or a new decision – cannot be subject to future call-in.

- 15 In the case of a decision by the Health and Well-Being Board or an officer, if the Decision Taker wishes to confirm the original decision, that decision shall be submitted to the next Executive Board meeting.
- 16 If the original decision was taken by the Health and Wellbeing Board or an officer, and the relevant Director is of the view that the original decision should be confirmed, but that urgency prevents them from submitting the decision to Executive Board;
- The Director shall obtain the approval of the relevant Executive Board Member before implementation;
 - Details of the Executive Member approval, together with reasons of urgency will be included in the new delegated decision form; and
 - The Director and relevant Executive Board Member will also be required to attend and give their reasoning to the next available meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Board

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Copy of the completed Call-In request form
- Appendix 2 - Report of the Director of Communities, Housing and Environment presented to Executive Board at its meeting on 18 October 2023.

(Please note that Appendix C to the Executive Board report has been designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3))

- Appendix 3 - Extract from the draft minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 18 October 2023.

Background papers

- None

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CALL IN REQUEST

Date of decision publication: **20th October 2023**

Delegated decision ref: **N/A**

Executive Board Minute no: **Minute no. 49, Executive Board 18th October 2023**

Decision description: **Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange**

Discussion with Decision Maker:

Prior to submitting a Call In, a nominated signatory must first contact the relevant officer or Executive Member to discuss their concerns and their reasons for wanting to call in the decision. Part of this discussion must include the Member ascertaining the financial implications of requesting a Call In.

Please identify contact and provide detail.

- Director/author of delegated decision report.
- Executive Board Member

Detail of discussion (to include financial implications)

Cllr Barry Anderson spoke with James Rogers (Director), Gerard Tinsdale (Chief Officer), and Cllr Jessica Lennox (Executive Member) on 20th October. He outlined the reasons for the call-in, which are set out in more detail in the section below.

It was confirmed there were no financial implications of calling in the decision.

Reasons for Call In:

All requests for Call In must detail why, in the opinion of the signatories, the decision was not taken in accordance with the principles set out in Article 13 of the Council constitution (decision making) (principles of decision making) or where relevant issues do not appear to be taken into consideration. *Please tick the relevant box(es) and give an explanation.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Proportionality (ie the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Respect for human rights
<input type="checkbox"/>	A presumption in favour of openness
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clarity of aims and desired outcomes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	An explanation of the options considered and details of the reasons for the decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Positive promotion of equal opportunities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural justice

We understand the need to take action at these sites due to the high rise blocks no longer being fit for purpose. However we have the following concerns:

1. Whilst the report notes consultation and engagement with residents, it does not include a full breakdown of the views of residents about the proposals. We think this should be presented more clearly, along with greater detail on the numbers consulted and number of responses, in order to gauge whether the current proposals have the wide support of existing residents.
2. The proposals will result in the loss of 360 units of housing, which will clearly have an impact on the housing register in the context of an already large waiting list of people needing social housing. We do not believe this factor has been sufficiently addressed in the report in terms of the explanation of options considered.
3. The future of these sites is an important aspect, and whilst the report says this will be considered in detail at a later stage we believe this should have happened before beginning the process of clearing the sites. It is vital that the project does not become stalled and that desired outcomes for the sites are properly understood.
4. In terms of what happens to existing residents in the short to medium term, has sufficient consideration been given to options that would allow existing communities to be kept together during the decant process? We also think in general there has been insufficient consideration of alternative options.
5. We also have concerns about the potential negative impact on the Housing Revenue Account. This decision may place unsustainable strain on the HRA as funds will need to be borrowed for capital purposes, while at the same time inward revenue flows will be squeezed, while dwelling numbers are reduced throughout the construction cycles of whatever types of property are subsequently built, for however long that takes, the effects possibly lasting years.

We would ask that the decision is reconsidered in light of the above concerns.

Leeds City Council Scrutiny Support

A Call In request may be made by a **minimum** of:

5 non-executive Members of council from the **same political group**;

or;

2 non-executive Members of council if **they are not from the same political group**.

This Call In request should be submitted to Scrutiny Support, 1st Floor West, Civic Hall by 5.00pm by no later than the fifth working day after the decision publication date. The following signatories (**original signatures only**) request that the above decision be called in.

Nominated Signatory



Print name Councillor Barry Anderson

Political Group Conservative

Signature



Print name Councillor Mark Dobson

Political Group Garforth and Swillington Independents

Signature



Print name Councillor Wayne Dixon

Political Group Social Democratic Party

Signature



Print name Councillor Robert Finnigan

Political Group Morley Borough Independents

Signature



Print name Councillor Diane Chapman

Political Group Liberal Democrats

Signature.....

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Political Group.....

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Political Group.....

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Political Group.....

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Print name

Political Group.....

Signature.....

Print name

Political Group.....

Signature.....

Print name

Political Group.....

Leeds City Council Scrutiny Support

For office use only: (box A)

Received on behalf of the Head of Democratic Services by:

Rebecca Atherton

Date: 27.10.23 Time: 10.05am SSU ref: 2023/24 - 78

For office use only: (box B)

Exemption status
checked:

Call In authorised: Yes

Date checked:

Signed: Rebecca Atherton

Signatures checked:

Date: 27.10.23

Receipts given:

Validity re article 13

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Future of six high rise and resident rehousing – Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange

Date: 18 October 2023

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

As part of our housing estate the council owns and manages these six high rise blocks, Bailey Towers, Brookland Towers and Ramshead Heights in Seacroft, Leafield Towers in Moortown, and Raynville Court and Raynville Grange in Armley. These blocks are of a Large Panel System (LPS) construction, each 10 storeys high with 60 flats - 30 one bedroom and 30 two bedroom – 360 homes in total.

As significant investment work is needed to ensure the long term future of the sites, including intrusive and costly strengthening works, an options appraisal was undertaken. The recommended approach is for all residents to be rehoused, with appropriate support for those who need it, and for subsequent demolition to clear the sites. This would enable the development of new modern housing in the future on the sites, whether by the council or other parties.

This supports our aim for all our residents to live in good quality, healthy and affordable homes and for them to be safe and feel safe, and to deliver an approach that provides best value.

Recommendations

Executive Board is recommended to

- a) Approve the rehousing of residents of secure tenanted flats in the blocks (Bailey Towers, Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Raynville Grange), and that Home Loss and Disturbance payments are made to qualifying residents. This will be supported by ongoing engagement with residents during implementation,
- b) Approve the award of 'band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants of the blocks,
- c) Approve the suspension of lettings to the flats and garages with any void properties taken out of charge,

- d) Approve the negotiation and undertaking of the re-purchase of any leasehold flats, and for compulsory purchase to be pursued if a voluntary approach is unsuccessful,
- e) Agree that the buildings should be safely demolished, creating clear sites,
- f) Note that activity will be progressed to explore options for the sites. For example for development by the council or with other parties, or for sale,
- g) Authorise the spend of £5,267,600 from the Housing Revenue Account capital programme to deliver rehousing and building emptying activity, and
- h) Agree that Initial Demolition Notices and Final Demolition Notices will be served by the Council at the appropriate times.

What is this report about?

Background

- 1 We need to address the challenge of council housing residents living in certain high rise blocks that are no longer fit for purpose. The six blocks, across four sites, need significant investment to be brought up to an appropriate standard to have a future as part of the council’s housing estate. These are:

Name	Ward	Post code	Number of housing units per site
Bailey Towers	Killingbeck & Seacroft	LS14 6PJ	120
Brooklands Towers		LS14 6PL	
Ramshead Heights		LS14 6PU	60
Leafield Towers	Moortown	LS17 5BR	60
Raynville Court	Armley	LS13 2QB	120
Raynville Grange		LS13 2QD	

- 2 These blocks are of a Large Panel System (LPS) construction by Reema, and in use since 1960 or 1961. They have exceeded their original design life, are in poor condition, and have significant investment needs including improvements for energy efficiency, concrete repairs, re-roofing, sprinkler installations, and replacement of heating and sewerage systems.
- 3 The overall need for investment is urgent, with significant challenges to maintain watertightness and undertake repairs and maintenance that represent value for money, as well as significant impacts on the quality of lives of many residents. This is also supported by low customer satisfaction ratings from residents for heating and insulation, and overall quality of their home.
- 4 This significant investment is not possible without major strengthening works, due to the specific design of the blocks. In addition, although these blocks currently meet all required safety standards, these will change over time, and this is important to plan for.
- 5 Making decisions this year on the future of the blocks supports and aligns with current activity to both
 - a) prepare and submit building safety cases for all 121 of the council’s high rise housing blocks, as part of the new Building Safety Act’s requirements on landlords, and
 - b) plan for making sure our council homes are energy efficient and affordable to heat – approximately 86% of these homes are currently rated band D or below for energy efficiency, and by 2030 local authorities will not be able to let such homes.

- 6 Options appraisal activity has been undertaken to inform the best course of action to take, in parallel with communications and engagement with residents over the summer.
- 7 The main options under consideration were a full refurbishment including structural works or demolition of the blocks, which would clear the sites to allow new homes to be built in the future by the council or other parties. Both options would involve support to rehouse residents to homes suitable for them in the longer-term. Given the nature, scale, and length of the advised structural works any refurbishment could only reasonably take place with no residents in occupation.
- 8 The affected properties are listed in Appendix A, together with maps to show their location and the site areas. It should be noted that these include the community room adjacent to Brooklands Towers. The options appraisal summary is at Appendix B.
- 9 At end September 345 of the 360 flats were occupied. Of these one is owner occupied by a leaseholder and two tenants have a live Right to Buy application.

The Proposal

- 10 From the options appraisal, refurbishment of the blocks has been discounted as both financially unviable, and a high risk approach with uncertainty including in relation to the additional extra years of building life that could be expected from these 1960s concrete structure buildings.
- 11 It is therefore proposed that all residents of the blocks are rehoused, and the buildings emptied and subsequently demolished to clear the sites.
- 12 Our aim would be that the sites are later developed for housing. New modern homes on the sites would be more energy efficient than refurbished blocks and meet all current quality and safety standards.
- 13 Given current financial pressures and costs involved it will be important to consider how sites can be developed affordably or sold to make the best use of resources. Given the various locations, sizes and configuration of the sites and the challenges and opportunities these present including for external funding, the approach for each may differ. Considering financial planning for new housing on other sites in the city, it may be many years before sites could be redeveloped directly by the council or in a partnership arrangement. We intend to work closely with colleagues in City Development to explore an appropriate strategic approach. The future use and development of the sites (including any land surrounding the buildings to be demolished) will be subject to further review. Implications would be considered and be included in any separate decision reports.
- 14 In taking forward the recommendations in this report we intend to continue learning from recent activity related to the Alderton Heights, Gipton Gates, and The Highways blocks.
- 15 *Rehousing and support for moving.* We are committed to supporting residents through the rehousing process and to successfully move to new homes that suit them longer-term, whilst working to manage the impact of this on the Leeds Homes Register. We will engage and work with all residents to identify their rehousing needs and support them to seek alternative housing.
- 16 To enable tenants to find new homes we propose to award them 'band A' priority on their housing applications from 1 November 2023 and will work closely with them to understand both their needs and preferences. At the same time, we also intend to give tenants 'direct let' status so that they can be considered for a direct offer of suitable accommodation. We may also explore ringfencing of properties to support rehousing, as we work with residents to understand their location preferences and consult on this with affected Ward Members.

- 17 Home Loss compensation and Disturbance payments for reasonable expenses will be made to qualifying tenants when they move, in line with statutory requirements. All tenants who qualify for the payments will become eligible to receive them when they move out on or after 1 November 2023. From October 2023 the statutory rate for Home Loss payment will be £8,100.
- 18 *Leaseholders*. We intend to work with the one current leaseholder involved and City Development to buy back their property on a voluntary basis, as it is expected that this will be the best outcome for both parties. In the unlikely event of not being able to reach an agreement on the acquisition of leaseholder properties, then we would look to undertake this by compulsory purchase.
- 19 *Right to Buy*. If the recommendation for demolition is agreed, it should be noted that a resultant action will be that an Initial Demolition Notice (IDN) will be served to tenants of the blocks, in line with Housing Act 1985 processes. This will suspend tenants' ability to exercise their Right to Buy their flats. Only the serving of a Final Demolition Notice (FDN) to residents stops the Right to Buy for these properties. The FDNs would be served later in the process, aligned with planning notice activity by any future demolition contractor. It is a requirement that the Council must also publish a demolition notice in the local newspaper and on its own website at the same time it serves any IDNs and again when it serves the FDNs.
- 20 *Suspending lettings and taking void properties out of charge*. This will enable the council to start to empty the blocks, with void properties (flats and garages) secured rather than made ready for re-letting, and to remove these properties from our assessment of key performance indicators for turnaround of voids and rent loss.
- 21 *Demolition*. The aim will be to minimise the time that buildings are empty before on-site activity starts to prepare the blocks for demolition. The method of demolition will be confirmed following appointment of a specialist contractor, however given the nature of the blocks it is expected to be undertaken using a top-down deconstruction approach, on a floor by floor basis. Following consultation with the internal service provider, and given the nature of the specialist requirements, it is proposed that one or more contractors would be competitively procured by the council (in accordance with both Contracts Procedure Rule 3.1.7 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015).
- 22 The approach to planning and procuring a contractor for demolition will be subject to further consideration and separate decisions. This may include exploring opportunities to provide a solution inclusive of securing the sites, and or making sure the cleared land available as a rough amenity asset, for example ensuring that ground is left in a safe condition, potentially with wildflower seeding where appropriate.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 23 Working to empty and then demolish these blocks will enable us to remove unsustainable and lower quality homes from the council housing stock, moving residents to accommodation of better quality that they can stay in for the longer term.
- 24 The most significant impact of the proposal will be on the current residents who will need to move. The resident response to engagement has been constructive. Whilst some residents have expressed sadness of having to move, most residents understand the requirement to invest in the blocks or to provide better quality homes. Across the six sites one in five residents had an active housing application prior to being informed, for these residents the proposal is an opportunity and help for them to secure new homes.

- 25 We are committed to support our tenants through the rehousing process. We will also work to maintain the blocks in good order whilst they are occupied, ongoing maintenance and repairs will continue as normal.
- 26 The rehousing of these residents, and the net loss of our council housing stock, will create additional pressures on the availability of social housing for people with applications on the Leeds Homes Register (see key risks and how they are being managed). The largest impacts will certainly be felt by the wards where the blocks are located and adjacent areas, however the impact will be city-wide as we learn more about residents' location preferences.
- 27 We will also engage with nearby residents and stakeholders who may be affected by activities over the coming years to empty and demolish the blocks, including any garage users that are not resident in the blocks.
- 28 Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration has been considered and has informed the approach to resident engagement to date. An impact assessment has been undertaken and included as Appendix D to the report. The action plan will be carried forward by the team, including to ensure that appropriate support for residents is in place throughout delivery, with ongoing outreach to tenants helping to make sure we understand their needs.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 29 Health and wellbeing. Given the known investment needs of these blocks, for many residents a new home will have a positive impact on their health and wellbeing. For example, a number of residents are living in flats which are not meeting our expectations for quality homes, and others where a housing priority will enable them to move more swiftly into a property more suited to changed needs such as fewer or more bedrooms or with adaptations.
- 30 In 2023 Leeds became a Marmot City seeking to strengthen shared commitments to reduce health inequalities, with housing identified as a priority area. The proposal to demolish the blocks supports that Marmot City work to reduce health inequalities by addressing issues with poor quality, inefficient housing and helping to reduce fuel poverty.
- 31 Inclusive Growth. As well as working to make sure that our rehousing support will be inclusive, we will also use internal service providers where possible. Civic Enterprise Leeds, through Leeds Building Services, already provides the voids and repairs service for four of these blocks with our contractor Mears covering the other two (the Raynviles). We will work with CEL, and with Facilities and Fleet Services, in relation to support for resident moves and building emptying activities, as well as with Safer Leeds in relation to CCTV and security services.
- 32 Where we need to undertake any procurements (for example for demolition contractors) we will also look to deliver additional social value.
- 33 Zero Carbon. The two most significant areas of environmental impacts for consideration will be building energy performance, and construction or demolition wastes.
- 34 Our LPS built high rise have the lowest average energy efficiency ratings of all our high rise block types, and some of the lowest tenant satisfaction in relation to heating and insulation of homes and overall quality of homes. In any new build homes energy performance would be significantly improved, and also better than could be achieved in a refurbished block.
- 35 These six blocks fall well below the city average energy efficiency rating of 70.12 (band C), with average block ratings ranging between 58.76 (band D) and 54.25 (band E). About 32% of the flats in these blocks have a rating of band E or below, and 86% D or below.

- 36 Extending the lifetime of social housing through refurbishment is often preferable in relation to estimated environmental benefits or impacts, given the extent of embodied carbon in buildings. However decisions on refurbishment or demolition to improve social housing are recognised as being complex, and projects need to be looked at on a case by case basis – more information is provided in Appendix B.
- 37 Re-use or recycling construction and demolition waste, including from strip out activity, reduces environmental impacts, and the council would look to maximise this as buildings are emptied and demolished. Any demolition contractors would be required to minimise and report total carbon dioxide emissions arising from the demolition process. Required actions to be undertaken would also be expected to include:
- a) The operation of an Environment Management System covering the main operations, with such system to be third party certified (to ISO 14001 or in compliance with BS 8555:2016).
 - b) Setting targets for site energy use and where relevant litres of fuel used, for potable water use arising from the use of plant, equipment and site accommodation, for minimising transportation movements and impacts resulting from the delivery of materials to or from site.
- 38 If developed by the council, any future new build housing on the cleared sites would be expected to incorporate the latest energy efficient and environmentally acceptable principles of design and construction. Design activity would ensure that orientation, layout, form of construction, heating and ventilation systems work together to provide optimum fuel cost efficiency and low carbon dioxide emissions. With all components and materials, wherever possible, capable of being recycled and obtained from renewable resources.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Killingbeck and Seacroft, Moortown, and Armley		
Have ward members been consulted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

- 39 Resident engagement has been undertaken to meet statutory requirements under the Housing Act 1985 (section 105) and government standards, to enable affected residents to make their views known and for the council to take these into account in decision making.
- 40 Most of the resident engagement was carried out over three weeks in July. This followed a communication to all residents which outlined the current position and provided a range of supporting questions and answers. At mid-August, approximately two thirds of residents had spoken with staff about the proposals at a combination of; drop-in sessions visiting the mobile office, home visits and phone appointments. Engagement with residents was held at various times and dates including evenings and weekends to reflect the respective resident profiles. The engagement sessions were well attended, with 210 households (60%) taking the opportunity to speak with officers.
- 41 From August onwards the service has continued to undertake further engagement on a one-to-one basis to seek to engage with every household. By end September we had discussed the proposals and the resulting rehousing process and our support with 275 (80%) of the households. From the start of the engagement, we have made clear to residents they can speak with officers at any point with any concerns or questions they may have.

- 42 We have also engaged with the one leaseholder (in Leaffield Towers). We first wrote to them in July with specific information related to the ownership of their flat and implications and provided a named point of contact for any queries. We will work with the leaseholder on next steps, including valuation of the property, after the decision has been made.
- 43 We have engaged with the groups that use the Brooklands Towers community room and outlined the current position and provided a range of supporting questions and answers. The groups are in regular contact with officers, and we will continue to support them in their activities as well as keep them informed about the future of the community room.
- 44 The vast majority of conversations with residents were constructive, with residents accepting the investment needs of the blocks and the need to provide high quality housing. Residents have also been reassured by the Home Loss compensation and the Disturbance payments to help them with the costs of moving. The engagement with residents has:
- a) Provided an early indication of the rehousing preferences in terms of preferred locations (in conversations 20% of households raised they would want to stay in the same area, whilst 9% raised that they wanted to move to a different part of the city), to inform our approach to rehousing and lettings,
 - b) Highlighted those residents who may need additional help and support with registering their housing applications (18% of households so far),
 - c) Been an opportunity to update our information about our residents including on a range of equality or support considerations, including any physical impairments or mental health conditions that will help provide more tailored support when rehousing starts, and
 - d) Given us insight in terms of the additional questions and issues where tenants would like further information or clarity.
- 45 Consultation with residents also highlighted some areas of more common concerns:
- a) Some residents (about 8% of households so far) raised that they were anxious or unhappy about moving from a home in which they had been settled for many years. We recognise how difficult this may be for some residents and will provide named local contacts and practical and proactive support throughout the process and regular updates.
 - b) A small number of residents also expressed concerns around the rehousing timescales and how quickly they might be expected to move. We know it will take time to rehouse everyone and will work with and support residents during the process.
- 46 We wrote to all residents again at the end of the summer with an expanded list of questions and answers based on the queries raised so far.
- 47 Following any Executive Board decision, the service will consider updating residents more widely who live in the immediate vicinity of the blocks.
- 48 The Executive Member for Housing has been regularly briefed on the development of these proposals. Local ward members were briefed ahead of resident engagement commencing, with information shared with local MPs. Ward members in other wards will be engaged as or when consequential impacts arise.
- 49 Close working across the council will continue to be needed to support delivery and further development of this work.

What are the resource implications?

50 The total cost to deliver the proposed activity to empty the blocks is estimated as £5,267,600, with spend from this financial year 2023/24 to 2027/8, estimated as follows:

Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022/23 £000's	FORECAST				
			2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2026/27 £000's
CONSTRUCTION (3)	2106.9	0.0	66.0	864.1	838.0	328.0	10.8
OTHER FEES / COSTS (7)	3160.7	0.0	99.1	1296.1	1257.1	492.1	16.3
TOTALS	5267.6	0.0	165.1	2160.2	2095.1	820.1	27.1
Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2022/23 £000's	FORECAST				
			2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	2026/27 £000's
Departmental Borrowing	5267.6	0.0	165.1	2160.2	2095.1	820.1	27.1
Total Funding	5267.6	0.0	165.1	2160.2	2095.1	820.1	27.1
Balance / Shortfall =	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

51 An Authority to Spend of £5,267,600 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme is needed to progress this activity. This will be most likely funded by departmental borrowing, however the service will continue to explore all other funding options available to minimise the revenue costs of borrowing upon the HRA.

Scheme Number	Project Title	2023/4	2024/5	2025/6	2026/7	2027/8	Total
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
32034/RAY	Raynviles	49.7	772.4	698.3	13.9	-	1534.3
32034/BRO	Brooklands & Bailey	30.2	530.9	632.6	488.7	14.4	1696.8
32034/RAM	Ramshead Heights	46.3	319.3	375.1	304.8	12.7	1058.2
32034/LEA	Leafield Towers	38.9	537.6	389.1	12.7	-	978.3
	Total Scheme	165.1	2160.2	2095.1	820.1	27.1	5267.6

52 Of the approximately £5.27m related to rehousing and building emptying costs, about 60% are accounted for by the Home Loss compensation payments for qualifying residents where the statutory rate for compensation increases in October each year, linked to housing market prices. Other costs include those related to move support for residents, buying back any leasehold properties, and activities as needed to empty the building, and allowance for additional security measures as needed.

53 Although not part of these costs, it should be noted that indicative total demolition costs for the sites are estimated at £12.4m inclusive of fees.

54 In addition an approximate net loss of income per year of approximately £80,000 per block has been estimated for every year that sites are not developed from when buildings are empty (for example accounting for rent loss but also for savings from maintenance including repairs) - for six blocks this would be £480,000 per year. This net income loss will be reflected in the HRA revenue budget going forward, as well as any financing costs incurred. As spend in the HRA is funded primarily by rent and service charges, savings within the revenue account will need to be identified to fund this programme of works.

55 Given current financial pressures careful consideration needs to be given to both the timing and the most cost-effective approach to plan for the future of the sites. No sums have been included

at this stage in relation to activity to progress survey and design work to explore how these sites might be progressed for development by the council. It should be noted that estimated costs to get to design proposals (Concept Design at RIBA stage 2) are in the region of £550,000 per site.

- 56 Dedicated staffing resource will need to be identified to support rehousing and building emptying, and for project management, funded by the HRA. This will be prioritised from existing staffing.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 57 Building safety. Work continues to be undertaken to mitigate against the inherent structural risk of any of our LPS blocks. The recent Building Safety Act 2022 also means that we will be required to submit a safety case for each of our high rise blocks by March 2024, for review by the regulator. There is risk that the regulator may not grant an occupancy certificate for some or all the blocks unless adequate mitigations and plans are in place, or for any certificate to be rescinded. The regulator will monitor our high rise portfolio, with any structural or fire incidents or major repairs being reported to them in real time. This risk is being monitored by the High Risk Residential Buildings (HRRB) Project and overseen by the Programme Board.
- 58 As flats become vacant, they will be made secure and soft strip out of plumbing and electrical wiring of any value will be undertaken to reduce risk of theft. In addition, we will also consider and work to manage any community safety needs as blocks become emptier for example for additional security from CCTV surveillance, mobile patrols or additional regular inspections.
- 59 Pressure on council housing stock and achieving timescales for rehousing. Rehousing residents from multiple blocks and removing these properties from our stock will increase the current high demand for council housing stock and increase waiting times. This could also lead to reputational damage and have a financial impact if emergency private housing is required. Not meeting estimated timescales for rehousing will increase costs and impact on timely procurement and delivery of demolition activity. Rehousing residents has been planned over several years to manage impact, and a project approach will help ensure effective resourcing and support for residents.
- 60 Existing budgets and resources. Irrespective of the preferred long-term solution, ongoing repairs and maintenance will continue to ensure the flats remain habitable for the residents. It is noted that these maintenance costs exceed the average for non-LPS blocks owing to the deterioration of the flats and communal areas as they have reached the end of their design life. Where investment is needed to the blocks, this will be forthcoming and proportionate to the remaining lifecycle they offer.
- 61 Sites not being redeveloped for housing and loss of homes in Leeds. Given the scale of costs involved in taking forward housing developments by the council, or even in some partnership arrangements, and other funding pressures including planning for new housing on other sites in the city, it could be many years before some of these sites are developed for housing. It is also possible that some sites, if sold, could be developed for other uses. Impacts include the net loss of council housing provision and homes in the city.

What are the legal implications?

- 62 The decisions set out in this report are being taken as a key decision and are subject to call-in.
- 63 Future resulting decisions arising from this report include any decisions related to ringfencing properties for affected residents to support rehousing; the procurement and undertaking of

demolition activity for the sites; and any required decisions related to the acquisition of leasehold properties including their compulsory purchase if voluntary sales are not able to be successfully negotiated.

- 64 Any decisions relating to future redevelopment, or sale of the land, would be separate decisions.
- 65 Appendix C contains information related to financial valuations of the land per site to support the Appendix B options appraisal content. It has been designated as exempt from publication under the council's Access to Information Procedure Rules paragraph 10.4 (3) because disclosure would be likely to adversely affect the commercial interests of the Council. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at present.
- 66 The Initial Demolition Notices referred to earlier must specify the period within which the Council intends to demolish the relevant building, and this period must not be more than what is a reasonable period to carry out the demolition and, in any event, no longer than 7 years. If the Council subsequently fails to demolish the relevant building within that period, the Council will need to re-start the notice process and will not be permitted to do that for a further five years unless it obtains Secretary of State consent to serve and publish new notices sooner.
- 67 There is close working with legal colleagues to ensure activity is being taken forward in compliance with key legislation. This includes the Land Compensation Act 1973 and the linked Home Loss Payments Regulations, and Right to Buy legislation. Ongoing engagement will include activity in relation to buying back leaseholder property, advice on any issues that arise with rehousing tenants and in relation to any compensation that tenants with live Right to Buy applications may be entitled to.
- 68 It should also be noted that three of the blocks have telecoms masts on their roofs, and leases are in place in relation to these. We are already working with legal colleagues and Asset Management on the lengthy processes required in relation to ending such leases and how any negotiations with the relevant telecoms companies might be progressed given challenges on another site. We would aim to start engagement in relation to these sites as soon as possible.
- 69 We continue to work to maintain our council homes to a good standard, in line with legislation that includes the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, the Building Safety Act 2022, and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 including 'Awaabs Law' measures related to damp and mould.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 70 All options considered are set out in Appendix B, with detail on the main options appraised and conclusions.
- 71 The full refurbishment option was discounted. This would have been the highest cost, least affordable and financially unviable, and a high risk approach with uncertainty including the additional extra years of building life that could be expected.
- 72 For refurbishment the indicative cost is approximately £164m including inflation, averaging at £27.5m per block, compared to indicative costs for demolition plus a like for like new build at approximately £133m, or £22m per block. For new build schemes external funding would be possible in some circumstances, for example where there would be a net increase in the number of homes on a site.

How will success be measured?

73 Residents are supported to move to new homes that suit them for the longer-term.

74 Rehousing and building emptying activities progress to plan.

75 Demolition activity delivers clear sites to plan.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

76 Rehousing activity and support would start in November 2023. The proposed timescales for rehousing are up to two years for each of Leaffield Towers, Raynville Court and Raynville Grange; and up to three years for Bailey and Brooklands Towers and Ramshead Heights, which are close together. Given current knowledge of our residents and of availability and turnover of lettings in those – or nearby – wards, these timescales are considered feasible but challenging. The timescales are estimates for planning purposes and will be appraised and revised as necessary considering any other corporate priorities that may arise.

77 The indicative timetable, if planned rehousing timescales can be achieved, is summarised as follows:

	Bailey Towers Brooklands Towers Ramshead Heights	Leaffield Towers	Raynville Court Raynville Grange
Rehousing starts, priority and direct let rehousing status can be awarded	1 Nov 2023	1 Nov 2023	1 Nov 2023
Buildings empty	end Oct 2026	end Oct 2025	end Oct 2025
Demolition contractor starts on site	January 2027	January 2026	January 2026
Site(s) clear	December 2027	August 2026	December 2026

78 The Chief Officer Housing will be responsible for implementing the recommendations detailed in the report. Housing Leeds will rehouse residents, maintain the buildings whilst occupied, and undertake activities to achieve empty and secure buildings.

79 Authorised colleagues in City Development will represent the council in relation to negotiations on leasehold property buybacks, and with telecoms companies in relation to any masts on roofs in accordance with existing delegations.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Affected properties and location of the sites
- Appendix B – Options Appraisal Summary
- Confidential Appendix C – Option Appraisal additional information on land valuations - Designated as being exempt from publication under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3)
- Appendix D – Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Impact Assessment

Background papers

None.

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Appendix A: Affected properties and location of the sites

The affected properties are:

Block	Number of flats	Number of garages
Bailey Towers, Seacroft LS14 6PJ	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	18
Brooklands Towers, Seacroft, LS14 6PL including the adjacent community room	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	8
Ramshead Heights, Seacroft, LS14 6PU	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	17
Leafield Towers Moortown, LS17 5BR	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	26
Raynville Court, Armley, LS13 2QB	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	6
Raynville Grange, Armley, LS13 2QD	60 – 30x1B & 30x2B	11
	360 flats in total & 1 community room.	86 garages in total.

Maps are provided on the following pages.

Please note that the red line boundaries of the sites show the land associated with the blocks and garages. It also indicates the areas covered by the Appendix C land valuations.

The land within the boundaries is owned by the council and does not include any protected green space (green space under the council's Site Allocation Plan).

Bailey Towers, Seacroft LS14 6PJ

The Bailey Towers site in Seacroft contains 60 flats in one high rise block. To the rear is a gated site of 18 associated garages.

The site measures 0.56 hectares and is surrounded by houses which are either privately owned or LCC council properties. Baileys Towers is also directly opposite Brooklands Towers and only divided by Brooklands Lane.



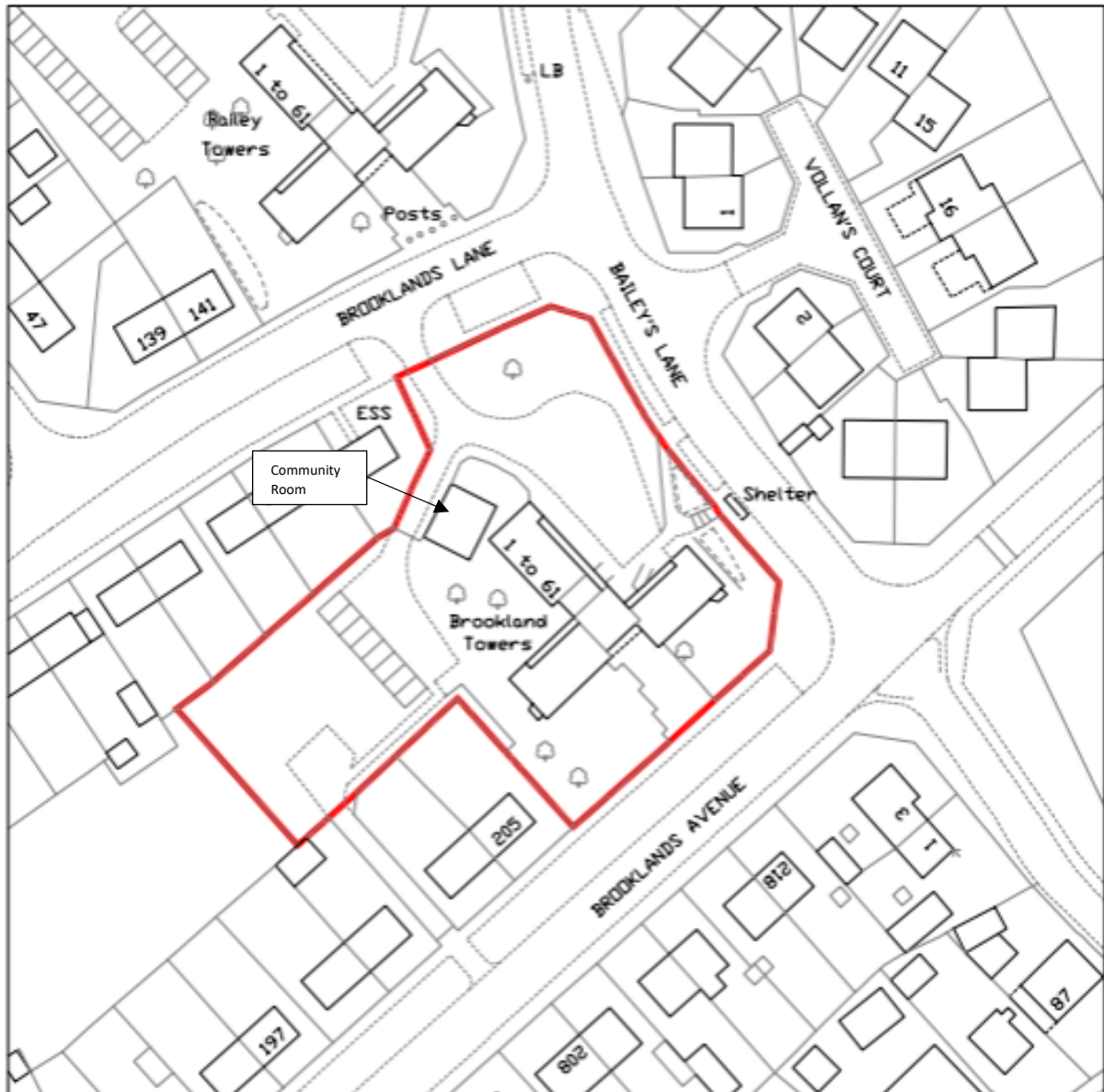
Please note the red line boundary is indicative in relation to the north west road / foot path edge. The adjoining green space would be respected in relation to any future development activity.

Brooklands Towers, Seacroft, LS14 6PL

The Brooklands Towers site in Seacroft contains 60 flats in one high rise block. To the rear is a gated site of 8 associated garages.

It has a detached community room which is part of the Housing Leeds stock and forms part of the site, with access managed by Housing Leeds.

The site measures 0.40 hectares and is surrounded by houses which are either privately owned or LCC council properties. Baileys Towers is also directly opposite Brooklands Towers and only divided by Brooklands Lane.



Ramshead Heights, Seacroft, LS14 6PU

The Ramshead Heights site in Seacroft contains 60 flats in one high rise block. To the rear are 17 associated garages.

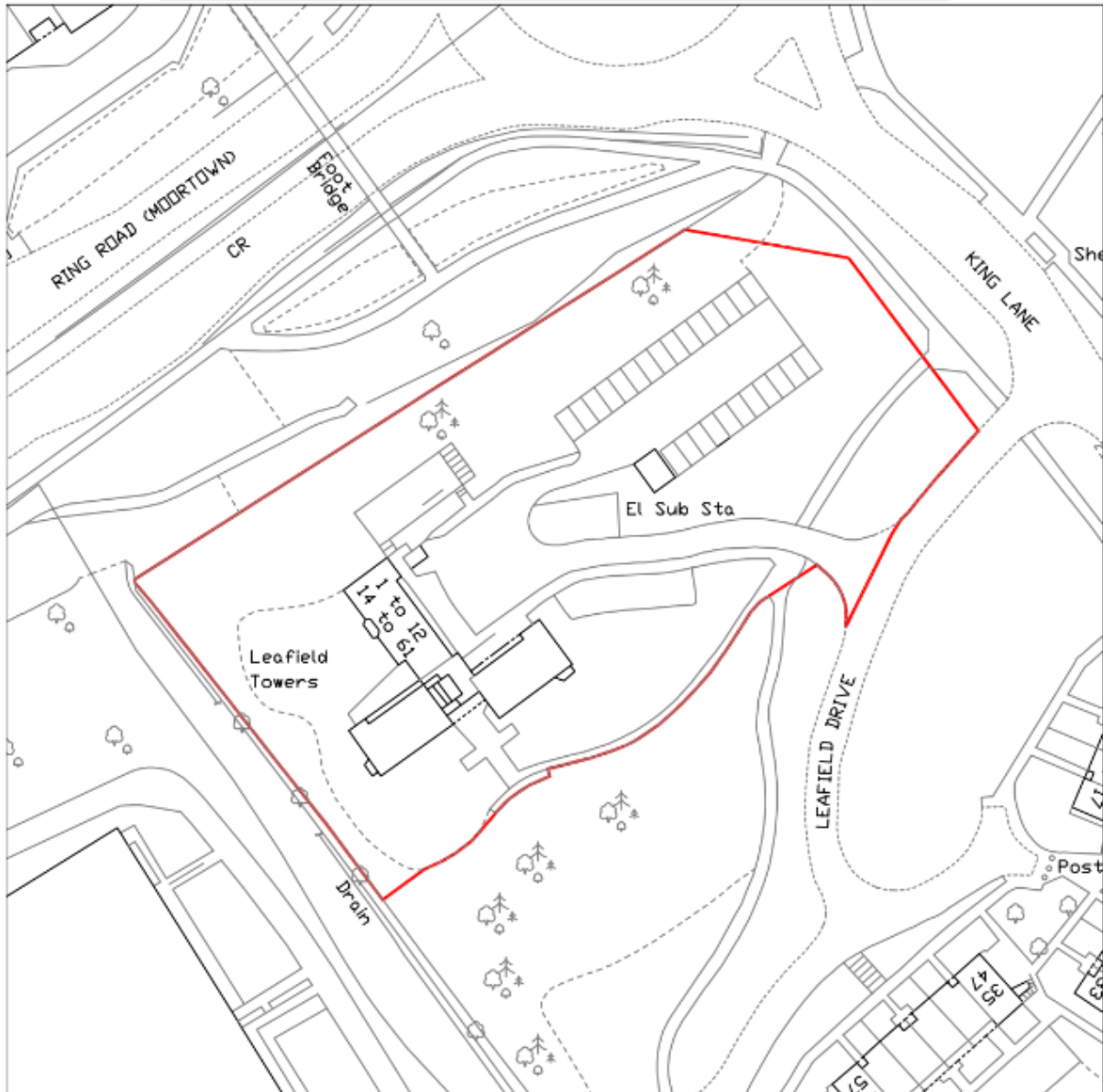
The site measures 0.69 hectares and is surrounded by surrounded by houses which are either privately owned or LCC council properties. This site is 0.4miles from the Brooklands and Bailey site.



Leaffield Towers Moortown, LS17 5BR

The Leaffield Towers site in Moortown contains 60 flats in one high rise block. To the front of the block are 26 associated garages.

The site measures 0.69 hectares and is surrounded by open grassed areas and is accessed from Leaffield Drive. The wider site is also surrounded by trees.



Raynvile Court, Armley, LS13 2QB & Raynvile Grange, Armley, LS13 2QD

The Raynvilles site in Armley contains 2 high rise blocks each with 60 flats - 120 in total. To the front are 26 associated garages.

The site measures 1.26 hectares and backs on to a large area of green space.



1. Background

- 1.1. An options appraisal activity for the six blocks was carried out in spring and summer 2023.
- 1.2. This has included extensive work within Housing Leeds, Finance and City Development to estimate rehousing and building emptying costs, consider technical advice on refurbishment, and to estimate demolition, new build and other costs, and secure other relevant information including rent and building running costs. Finance colleagues have supported this activity and modelled the outcomes.

2. Options Considered

2.1. Two principal options were considered for the future of the blocks, with financial modelling activity undertaken to understand viability. These both involve rehousing all residents before major work starts on unoccupied buildings. The costs of rehousing and building emptying are additional and outlined in the main report and have not been included in cost information in this appendix.

- Full refurbishment including structural works
- Demolition to clear the sites, followed by either redevelopment with council homes, redevelopment with homes developed by or with another party, selling the land for development, or retaining it to be developed later.

2.2. Other options considered but discounted for further activity include:

- Do nothing / minimum. This would not address the need for structural improvements to be made to these blocks, and majorly limit improvements (e.g. to improve energy efficiency for residents) and have an unacceptable risk of not achieving Building Occupancy Certificates.
- Managed decline and demolition. Includes suspending lettings but not actively supporting rehousing. Issues as above but greater impact on residents and does not meet our values as a good council and landlord including to maintain our buildings.
- Full refurbishment including structural works with most residents remaining in situ. Would involve some residents moving, and the temporary decanting of the remaining residents. Not recommended by our technical consultants, or meeting our values as a good council and landlord linked to wellbeing and safety of residents given the scale and length of works and disturbance.
- Empty the blocks, secure the sites, and sell the land with the buildings in place. The sale of the sites for development without building demolition expected to be very unattractive to potential buyers, and unacceptable risks related to health and safety from high rise left empty for extended periods (antisocial behaviour including vandalism almost certain).

2.3. The principal areas of focus in the appraisal to achieve best value are:

- Costs and affordability. Making the best use of our resources.

- Alignment with council ambitions, policies and plans. These specifically include residents living in good quality and affordable homes, meeting affordable housing need and housing growth, for residents to be safe and feel safe, improving energy performance in homes and reducing fuel poverty and progress towards carbon neutrality.
- Risk.

3. Assumptions

- 3.1. The financial modelling incorporated a range of assumptions for costs for rehousing and building emptying, refurbishment and demolition and new build, as well as in relation to timescales for delivery (including that rehousing can be delivered to plan), inflation and interest rates, rental incomes and losses, and temporary savings on maintenance costs during works.
- 3.2. Refurbishment costs have been developed based on summer 2022 costs plans from our technical consultants and amended for inflation. Demolition costs have been estimated from costs of current activity to demolish high rise buildings at The Highways, and new build from work to explore design and costs of building new high rise social housing.
- 3.3. Inflation rates have been unstable and significantly increased the costs of construction and other activity. Forecasts are uncertain, however inflation on construction related costs has been estimated as:
- 2024/25 - 8%
 - 2025/26 - 6%
 - 2026/27 - 5%
 - 2027/8 onwards – 3%
- 3.4. 10% client contingency allowance has been included on construction related costs including surveys for prudence, given estimates reflect an early stage of plans with low levels of design information currently available and significant uncertainties that remain to be addressed and quantified.
- 3.5. There is a risk that changes in interest rates in future years affect borrowing costs. At present these can change frequently. Estimated interest rates used in the financial modelling are advised by LCC treasury colleagues and are outlined below:
- Year 1 (2023/24) - 5.25%
 - Year 2 (2024/25) - 4.25%
 - Year 3 (2025/26) - 3.25%
 - Year 4 onwards (2026/27 - onwards) - 3%

4. Full refurbishment

- 4.1. Once blocks are empty, the refurbishment option would be to undertake structural strengthening works together with external wall insulation, and other necessary investment work (for example fire safety works as needed, sprinkler installation, communal rewires, re-roofing, waste stack replacement, heating, kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors) to prolong the life of the blocks. The type of structural solution advised by our technical consultants is to use a robust 'exoskeleton' approach. Effectively to create a steel external framework to which walls are tied, plus extensive strengthening of the walls and floors of flats as needed.

- 4.2. It is estimated to take about three years to complete at each site, once blocks are empty and assuming capacity to plan and deliver work concurrently with blocks empty for minimal time before a contractor starts on site. Refurbished homes could be ready at Leaffield Towers and the Raynviles before the end of 2028, Ramshead Heights and Brooklands and Bailey Towers before the end of 2029, at the very earliest.
- 4.3. *Costs and affordability.* This is the most costly option, and is not financially viable. It would not break even within viability guidelines, with payback not achieved within 100 years, and is not considered value for money. Costs were initially modelled with flats let at social rent, however the option was also not financially viable if rent was set at an affordable rate capped at Local Housing Allowance rates. It is assumed that no significant external funding would be able to be secured. The indicative cost (excluding borrowing) is approximately £165m, averaging at £27.5m per block, or £458,000 per flat.
- 4.4. *Council ambitions.* Refurbishment would re-provide the same number and types of units in each block i.e. a total of 360 units (50% one bedroom flats and 50% two bedroom) and improve the overall quality of homes. However, the refurbished flats and block would continue to be of the same configuration – limiting the opportunity to adjust property type to local needs. Also limited would be changes that could be made to meet modern standards and current legislation that would apply to new buildings, including in relation to accessibility and fire safety. The addition of external wall insulation to these buildings has also been highlighted as significantly reducing light levels in the flats (potentially by 25%) and narrowing balcony space.
- 4.5. In relation to carbon and energy efficiency, refurbished flats and blocks would be more energy efficient than at present, but less so than new build, given inherent issues such as cold-bridging and limitations on space and access. Use of renewables in new heating has not been factored into costs at this stage, although options are expected to be limited by both space and impact on structural loading.
- 4.6. The nature of structural works and refurbishment activity would involve similar preparatory strip out work to that needing to be undertaken for demolition, however by retaining the building shell some carbon would remain embodied in the building.
- 4.7. *Risk.* After the disruption and costs, the buildings will still fundamentally be 1960's large panel system high rise and need a 15 year intrusive inspection regime of the structure as well as continued building risk management activities. There are also no guarantees that the buildings will have an additional 40 years or more life, future inspection surveys may identify further deterioration and corrosion within the existing concrete structure requiring further repairs and strengthening works.
- 4.8. This is also the most risky option in terms of costs and delivery. There are significantly greater construction and financial risks of carrying out complex strengthening work to an over 60 year old LPS building, compared to a new build construction or normal building refurbishment. There is expected to be low industry appetite for works of this nature and complexity, which may create difficulties in finding a contractor or specialist subcontractors, and the risk of delay or project cancellation due to design and/or construction difficulty or identification of further building defects.

5. Demolition to clear the sites and enable future development

- 5.1. Once blocks are empty, demolition would be undertaken. The method of demolition at a site would be confirmed following the appointment of a specialist contractor, however given the nature of the blocks it is expected that that a top-down deconstruction approach would be undertaken, floor by floor.
- 5.2. Timescales from blocks empty and the contractor being appointed to a site cleared are estimated as between 10 and 14 months, depending on whether there is one or two blocks on the site and assuming that activity can be progressed to minimise the time between a block being empty and the site handed over to a contractor.
- 5.3. Redevelopment with new build council homes. For comparison purposes, modelling has been undertaken of new build high density housing developed by the council, procuring a contractor for delivery, with the same number of units to be rebuilt on each site. New apartments would be expected to be a mix of one and two-bedroom, with a greater proportion of one-bedroom units, plus up to 10% three-bedroom units, and rented at an affordable rate (assumption in modelling is Local Housing Allowance rate rents).
- 5.4. It should be noted that there is considerable uncertainty about the development potential of each site. On some sites it should be assumed that like for like numbers are not achievable, given site constraints and the need to meet Planning requirements – including in relation to parking provision, acceptable height of new developments, and provision of green and amenity space. On other sites however there may be potential for greater numbers of units to be provided.
- 5.5. Timescales including demolition are estimated to take around four years to complete (depending on the site and number of blocks involved), once the blocks are empty.
- 5.6. Redevelopment with homes developed by or with another party. This would involve a partnership arrangement. For example a guarantee to buy a number or proportion of homes from the developer and / or paying upfront costs or a form of lease over an agreed period. This could enable another Registered Provider of Social Housing to bring Housing England or Affordable Housing grant or their own or other resources to enable development.
- 5.7. Selling the land for development. This would be on a site by site basis, with the land sold to another party, for example a Registered Social Landlord or housing developer. Although a loss of council homes on each site, the land would be expected to be designated for housing under current local plans and could be developed by others. Any capital receipts from sales would be expected to offset a proportion of the costs incurred for demolition and site clearance.
- 5.8. Retaining the land for it to be developed later. This is expected to involve leaving hoardings around the sites, or potentially managing some or all cleared sites as a rough amenity asset. For example making sure rough ground is left in a safe condition and with wildflower seeding where appropriate. Land would be retained as part of a bank of sites that could be considered for development as the financial climate changes for example reduced pressures on the Housing Revenue Account, changes in inflation and/or interest rates, and changes to external funding requirements.
- 5.9. *Costs and affordability*. This option would also be costly. Demolition alone is estimated at £12.4m, averaging at over £2m per block. An approximate net loss per year of approximately £80,000 per block has been estimated for every year that sites

are not developed (for example accounting for rent loss but also for savings from maintenance including repairs) - for six blocks this would be £480,000 per year.

- 5.10. The indicative cost of redevelopment with high density housing on a like for like replacement is approximately £121m, averaging at £20m per block or £336k per apartment. Individual sites would payback within a 60 year borrowing period, but if the council were to redevelop, it would not be able to benefit from use of Right to Buy receipts – except in situations where there was a net increase in the numbers of homes on a site. These new build plus demolition comes to approximately £133m, averaging at £22m per block or £369k per apartment, for comparison with refurbishment costs. This is an indicative cost, local site conditions after surveys and external factors may impact project costs.
- 5.11. Affordability is a major concern, due to both high and rising borrowing costs and the cumulative impact of funding multiple housing projects. Borrowing for any development scheme would involve sizeable annual repayments up to 60 years that would impact on the already pressured Housing Revenue Account. The scale of investment needed cannot be afforded if all projects progress concurrently.
- 5.12. Affordability and improved payback periods would be improved if unit costs could be reduced, and / or increased numbers achieved on the sites linked to enabling use of some Right to Buy receipts. Other external funding options could be explored however funding programmes for these timescales are not known. Any opportunities to reduce funding by debt will be explored.
- 5.13. In relation to land sales, the confidential Appendix C contains summer 2023 land valuations. Capital receipts would be used to offset costs incurred but are not expected to be of such a value as to support funding of other activity.
- 5.14. Retaining the land for later development is expected to be a minimal additional cost e.g. upfront costs for hoardings and / or rough ground condition could be built into demolition contract specifications.
- 5.15. *Council ambitions.* Demolition of the blocks would remove these high rise blocks from our council stock – given they are no longer fit for purpose with significant investment needs including for energy efficiency, and financially unviable to refurbish. Recycling or re-use of construction and demolition waste reduces environmental impacts, and the council would look to maximise this when buildings are demolished, to minimise waste to landfill.
- 5.16. Council new build (delivered directly or through a partnership arrangement) on some of the sites in the future would enable the reprovision of new council homes and reduce the net loss of stock. However, any new housing developed would be more modern and energy efficient, need to meet all current standards including those relating to accessibility and use of renewable energy, have a minimum of 60 years life, and be informed by local housing needs via the Planning process.
- 5.17. *Risk.* Risks in relation to this option are most notably around the development potential for each site, and ability for sites to be developed for housing over the coming years – particularly for affordable housing – resulting in a net loss of council housing provision and homes in the city.
- 5.18. The development potential for each site would benefit from being explored in greater detail. Clarity on what is likely to be achieved on each site could only be

reached by undertaking detailed site surveys, funding design activity, and working closely with officers from Planning.

- 5.19. Given the scale of costs involved in taking forward housing developments by the council, or even in some partnership arrangements, and other funding pressures including planning for new housing on other sites in the city, it could be many years before some of these sites are developed for housing. It is also possible that some sites, if sold, could be developed for other uses.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1. The full refurbishment option should be discounted. This would be the highest cost, least affordable and financially unviable. In addition, it is a high risk approach with uncertainty including the additional extra years of building life that could be expected.
- 6.2. After rehousing residents, sites should be demolished and cleared as soon as possible for health and safety reasons. Demolition of the blocks would remove these high rise blocks from our council stock – given they are no longer fit for purpose with significant investment needs including for energy efficiency, and financially unviable to refurbish.
- 6.3. The costs of demolition, plus annual net losses to council housing income if homes are not replaced, would still be sizeable – at least £17m over 10 years, but outweighed by costs of borrowing to either refurbish or develop the sites. Sale of the land at some sites may help mitigate costs but should be considered as part of a strategic approach.
- 6.4. The longer-term aim should be that these sites are redeveloped for housing. How this happens for each site may differ, given the different locations, sizes and configuration of the sites and the challenges and opportunities these present.

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As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: Communities, Housing and Environment	Service area: Housing
Lead person: Helen Gibson	Contact number: 0113 378 5825
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment:	

1. Title: Future of six high rise and resident rehousing – Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange.

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy **Service / Function** **Other**

If other, please specify

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team For example, service user, manager of service, specialist
Helen Gibson	Leeds City Council	Project Manager (Programme Lead)
Helen Jackson	Leeds City Council	Head of Business Development & Housing Projects
Maddie Edwards	Leeds City Council	Head of Housing Management
Mandy Sawyer	Leeds City Council	Head of Housing and Homelessness
Tom O'Connell	Leeds City Council	Area Manager
Vicki Hooper	Leeds City Council	Service Manager
Ian Montgomery	Leeds City Council	Service Manager
Roisin Donnelly	Leeds City Council	Housing Manager
Kathryn Bramall	Leeds City Council	Housing Manager
Jamie Sampler	Leeds City Council	Project Officer

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

This assessment considers six of the high-rise blocks owned and managed by the council, three in Seacroft, one in Moortown and two in Armley. These blocks are of a

Large Panel System (LPS) construction, each 10 storeys high with 60 flats - 30 one bedroom and 30 two bedroom – 360 homes in total.

Block	Ward
Bailey Towers	Killingbeck & Seacroft
Brooklands Towers	
Ramshead Heights	
Leafield Towers	Moortown
Raynville Court	Armley
Raynville Grange	

As significant investment work is needed to bring the blocks up to an appropriate standard, including intrusive and costly strengthening works, an options appraisal was undertaken. The recommended approach is for all residents to be rehoused, with appropriate support for those who need it, and for subsequent demolition to clear the sites. This would enable the development of new modern housing in the future on the sites whether by the council or other parties.

This supports our aim for all our residents to live in good quality, healthy and affordable homes and for them to be safe and feel safe, and to deliver an approach that provides best value.

The aim is to start rehousing residents from November 2023, as well as suspending new lettings, removing voids from housing stock, the award of 'band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants and the negotiation with leaseholders to repurchase any leasehold flats. Qualifying residents will be paid a home loss and / or disturbance payment.

Future resulting decision(s) will include the procurement and undertaking of demolition activity for the sites, and any required decisions relating to the acquisition of leasehold properties; including compulsory purchase if voluntary buy-back sales are not able to be successfully negotiated.


Any decision(s) relating to future redevelopment or sale of the land would be separate decisions for housing and subject to separate reports.

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment
(complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>

A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	
<p>Please provide detail:</p> <p>This supports the aspirations set out in the Best Council Plan, in particular the objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone living in good quality, affordable homes, and; • for everyone to be safe and feel safe. <p>Working to empty and then demolish these blocks will enable us to remove unsustainable and lower quality homes from the council housing stock, moving residents to accommodation of better quality that they can stay in for the longer term. It will also support compliance with the new regulatory requirements for residential high-rise buildings under the Building Safety Act.</p> <p>The scope of this assessment covers the full programme of rehousing activities required to relocate residents and leaseholders from the above 6 blocks, as well as the decision to demolish and clear the sites.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Suspension of new lettings</u>: the suspension of lettings (to the flats and the nearby garages) with any void properties taken out of charge. • <u>Award of priority bidding statuses</u>: award of 'band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants of the blocks to facilitate bidding through Leeds Homes. • <u>Demolition of garage sites</u>: demolition of garage site(s) in advance of the main demolition if required (this would be undertaken through Leeds Building Services). • <u>Rehousing and support for moving</u>: We are committed to supporting residents through the rehousing process and to successfully move to new homes that suit them longer-term, whilst working to manage the impact of this on the Leeds Homes Register. We will engage and work with all residents to identify their rehousing needs and support them to seek alternative housing. • <u>Buy back of leasehold properties</u>: including obtaining a survey to agree a suitable property value through to the negotiation of voluntary buy-back, and if unsuccessful; the compulsory purchase process. • <u>Site security</u>: As flats become vacant, they will be secured. In addition, we will also consider and work to manage any community safety needs as blocks become emptier e.g. for additional security from CCTV surveillance, mobile patrols or additional regular inspections. • <u>Site access</u>: this will be maintained to contactors, subject matter experts, staff members, ward members or any other ad-hoc visitors as required, along with maintaining/ providing relevant CX alerts to these visitors. <p>In relation to rehousing support internal service providers will be used where possible. Civic Enterprise Leeds, through Leeds Building Services, already provides the voids and repairs service for the blocks in Seacroft and Moortown. Mears provide the voids and repairs service for the Raynville blocks. Civic Enterprise Leeds will provide the move support for all residents across the city.</p>	

Following rehousing completion, demolition is expected to be undertaken. The procurement decisions for all sites will be subject to a separate decision(s).

4b. Service, function, event please tick the appropriate box below	
The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail:	

5. Fact finding – what do we already know
 Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.
 (priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)

Demographic information on the residents within the 6 blocks has been initially collected via Civica (CX) Housing ICT system in May 2023 of Main and Joint tenants (not household members). This includes information on the volume of residents and leaseholders, community language details and the volume of known disabilities or any mental health conditions, see table 1 (below).

Table 1: Residents Profile (May 2023)

Age:	Range 18 - 88 with 17% of residents aged <30, 38% of residents aged >55
Gender:	59% Male, 40% Female, 1% Unknown
Language Preference:	English 58%, Polish 1% Other <1%, Unknown 40%
Medical Indicators:	Total Registered Disabilities 59, Mental Health Impairment 18, Physical Impairment 2, Other 43
Religion:	Not Applicable
Sexual Orientation:	Not Applicable

The average age across the 6 blocks is 49. With 140 residents aged >55 and seven of those residents aged >80. There are six tenancy holders aged <19 who are not classed as vulnerable. Out of all the blocks, Leafield Towers has the highest percentage of residents that are over 55 (62%).

40% of residents across the 6 blocks have an unknown language preference, this places a requirement on the rehousing project team to be aware and supportive of any cultural, language or literacy implications.

The primary language is English representing 218 residents. With 1% of residents declaring a non-English language (Polish) and <0.3% listed as other language need. 149

residents had no recorded/ unknown language. This represents 40% of the residents across the 6 blocks.

Rehousing will be in line with the council's lettings policy. Equality issues are taken into account, including by residents being able to express their preference on the areas they wish to be rehoused in. Individual needs (e.g. disability) are also considered in the offer of suitable accommodation.

Direct engagement with residents / leaseholders

In July 2023, the residents (tenants and leaseholders) were engaged on the known plans for the six high-rise blocks and to gather EDCI support data to address identified data gaps. The following activities were completed as part of this programme:

- Initial letters drop; a letter to the residents explaining the full remit of known plans to suspend lettings, rehouse residents / leaseholders and conduct an options appraisal to determine a refurb or demolition of the blocks. This letter included anticipated FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions).
- Initial letters drop (email); an electronic version of the initial letter drop (detailed above)
- Poster: a poster outlining engagement opportunities to residents situated in the noticeboard on site for each block.
- Mobile office / on site drop-in; three sessions held per Cluster (1 daytime session, one evening session and a weekend session) to allow maximum engagement with residents and provide the opportunity for open Q&A.
- Bookable appointment sessions (in-person); a total of 36 appointment slots per block (30 min slots per session across two dates) which allowed residents / leaseholders to ask questions, raise concerns and obtain information, advice and guidance in a private setting.
- Bookable appointment sessions (telephone): a total of 36 appointment slots per block (30 min slots per session across two dates) which allowed residents / leaseholders to ask questions, raise concerns and obtain information, advice and guidance over the telephone.
- Finalisation letters drop; a final message of thanks to the residents / leaseholders, reminding them of contact details for any follow-up queries and updated FAQs based on some of the questions residents asked us.

It should be noted that:

- bookable appointments helped maximise engagement with residents who may otherwise have found it difficult to attend a drop-in session or public event.
- colleagues are aware of the translation services available if required, to help ensure engagement with non-English language residents and;
- services available to have any material issued in large print and braille.
- during the advertised engagement activity, staff door knocked and met a number of residents which also helped identify any vulnerabilities or support needs.

Following the advertised engagement sessions, we have reviewed those who we have yet to speak to, about the future of the blocks and sought individual contact based on any known information - such as via an interpreter, or through an advocate (further details below).

Data collected from the consultation and engagement outreach sessions (detailed above) has been analysed and thematised, points arising in relation to equality characteristics requirements have been fully considered, with 210 properties successfully engaged, resulting in data being collected on declarations of 13 caring responsibilities, 26 physical disabilities and 13 mental health impairments.

It should be noted that the overall resident response to engagement has been positive. Whilst some residents have expressed sadness of having to move, most residents understand the requirement to invest in the blocks to provide better quality homes. Two thirds of residents that stated an area of choice preference across the engagement sessions, wished to remain in the local area. One in five residents are currently actively seeking rehousing with a housing application already in place. The engagement has also helped identify those who may need additional help and support with registering their housing applications and move support.

All additional EDCI declarations will be included on the rehousing project's tracker to ensure that identified needs are continually met throughout the rehousing project. All communications have been drafted/ logged and will continue to be reviewed and updated, to support planning, monitoring and delivering communications and engagement activity throughout the rehousing project's delivery.

**Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information
Please provide detail:**

Data collected in May on these high-rise blocks presents a population of circa 373 main and joint tenancy holders.

The main area of data gaps relates to disabilities. In 84% of records, we have no information. In addition, in 40% of records on language preference are recorded as 'not known'. These areas were identified to explore in our engagement activity so that we can provide these residents with appropriate support, and we are updating information on our systems accordingly. We also do not hold any nationality data set.

Medical Indicators: Total Registered Disabilities 59, Mental Health Impairment 18, Physical Impairment 2 and Other 43.

A programme of direct engagement with residents and leaseholders was delivered in July 2023 and throughout August 2023 to collect any additional data. Across the 6 blocks we have spoken with 60% of households. To engage with the remaining resident a program of engagement has started again by local teams which commenced in August 2023. This will ensure residents are aware of the plans for the blocks and help identify any further support needs.

Details of the second programme of engagement is outlined below (which is ongoing):

- Data gathering- we have reviewed who we have not spoken to about the future of the blocks and sought individual contact. This was based on any known information such as via an interpreter, or through an advocate (further details below).
- Interpreter supported appointments; where an identified language preference was noted, a telephone or face-to-face appointments with the support of an interpreter will be arranged.

- Text message series: a short message is proposed to encourage those households who we have not spoken to about the future of the blocks, contact their local housing office for further information.
- Home visits: for some residents it was noted that a home visit would be more beneficial to confirm they are aware of the plans and to gather any data on EDCI requirements.

This programme will continue through September and into October. At the beginning of September, across the 6 blocks, we have spoken with 78% of households. It may not be possible to achieve 100% confirmation of engagement with all residents prior to rehousing. However, we will continue working to make sure that all residents have been engaged with and are aware of the support available.

Action required:

The following actions are required to address identified data gaps and to utilise known EDCI data to enhance the rehousing project's delivery:

- Deliver continuous rehousing outreach activity; to seek confirmation of known plans and EDCI considerations of the remaining 105 households identified as a data gap, through local Housing Office and rehousing project team rehousing engagement.
- Transpose identified EDCI and non-EDCI considerations; onto the rehousing project tracking document so that all considerations can be monitored and identified support provided throughout the rehousing project's delivery.
- Utilise support referral processes; to address any remaining data gaps following the second outreach activity which seeks to provide adequate information, advice and support to residents declaring EDCI considerations throughout the project's delivery. For example, an Adaptations referral.
- Establish EDCI rehousing project controls; established through adding an entry to the rehousing project's Risk Register. This will ensure consideration and support levels are reviewed and confirmed as adequate throughout the rehousing project's risk assessment practices.

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Activity for resident engagement has been covered in earlier sections of this assessment.

An internal Board is providing leadership and oversight of this activity, with a membership consisting of senior managers across Housing as well as in City Development and Finance, led by the Chief Officer for Housing. This Board will retain overarching responsibility for ensuring appropriate and timely engagement with designated stakeholder groups.

Cross-council and elected member engagement has taken place to gather insight, perspective, feedback on the proposed approach and to prepare for enacting the decision. Information on this is provided in the decision report.

Action required:

The following actions are required to maintain fair, cohesive and inclusive communications throughout the project's delivery:

- Regularly review and update the approach to communication; key communications will be noted, relevant audiences and planned delivery dates identified.
- Communications-inclusive delivery team; including representation from Housing's Communications team which will support communication outputs, as well as inputting communication-related subject matter expertise throughout delivery.

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex (male or female) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

(**Other** can include – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being)

Please specify:

Data collected in July 2023 identified common questions/ themes of residents across the 6 blocks. It identified that some residents were concerned about the financial impact of moving will have and/or requested support with rehousing. This was either applying for rehousing due to difficulties using the online application form or physically moving.

Support will be in place to help residents claim the home loss/disturbance payments which will support residents' concerns about the financial impact. Local Housing teams will also support residents with any benefit claims and housing application enquiries.

Within the FAQs issued to tenants, a section is also included about financial abuse and its forms. Should any resident have any concerns about keeping themselves or their money

safe or are approached by someone they do not know asking about money. We have encouraged them to approach their local housing office.

Stakeholders

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members | <input type="checkbox"/> Suppliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify | | |

Potential barriers

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Built environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information and communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Timing | <input type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial exclusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment and training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function | |

Please specify

8. Positive and negative impact

Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact-finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers

8a. Positive impact:

The following positive factors have been considered during this assessment:

- Residents will be able to move to homes that suit them in the longer term, that are of better quality, for example, tenants with medical issues will be assessed for more appropriate type of housing, and overcrowded households will be offered larger accommodation.

- Residents that had already wanted to move will be able to do so more easily and quickly.
- Financial compensation will be provided to qualifying residents for home loss and/or disturbance.

Action required:

Not applicable

8b. Negative impact:

The following negative factors have been considered in this assessment:

- Residents will all need to move. Rehousing can be disruptive and unsettling for those affected and could result in social and /or family support networks being weakened.
- Rehousing these residents, and the temporary loss of stock, will have negative implications for other people waiting for council homes in Leeds.
- Some tenants at the blocks are vulnerable and have additional support needs and will need support throughout the rehousing process.
- Any tenants with a Right to Buy application, will not be able to progress this.
- Trespassers may be attracted to the sites as the blocks become emptier and then unoccupied
- Residents living nearby may be negatively impacted when occupancy levels drop significantly.

Action required:

The following actions are required to balance the negative factors being assessed in this report:

- Award of priority and direct letting statuses to tenants; to remove any blocking factors which may delay or impede rehousing progress / efficiencies.
- Right-to-buy protection; to ensure that current discounts are protected and progress to the residents' new tenancies, in line with LCC policies and eligibility criteria.
- Site security provision(s); to minimise anti-social behaviour within the blocks and dwellings, reviewed frequently as site occupancy decreases.
- Local resident communication(s); agreement of key messages and communication mechanism(s) to outreach to residents with the locale.
- Additional support for vulnerable residents; ensuring that staffing resources are available to support residents to make a housing application and progress the rehousing process.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Please provide detail:	
Action required: Not applicable	

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other? (for example, in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Please provide detail:	
Action required: Not applicable	

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another? (for example where your activity or decision is aimed at adults could it have an impact on children and young people)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Please provide detail:	
Action required: Not applicable	

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
<u>Deliver ongoing rehousing outreach activity</u> ; to seek confirmation of any rehousing and support needs. To also gather EDCI considerations of the remaining tenancy holders identified as a data gap, through local Housing Office(s) rehousing engagement.	September 2023 to rehousing conclusion	Housing Officers assigned to support rehousing project rehousing activities are making a record of unrecorded EDCI considerations and escalating to the rehousing project team, as required.	Mandy Sawyer / Tom O'Connell / Pamela Parker / Elizabeth Goor/ Maddie Edwards
<u>Utilise support referral processes</u> ; between the local Housing Office(s) & other services to provide support to residents as identified.	From early November 2023	Process agreed with all services as needed to support the rehousing project, whereby rehousing assessments completed with appropriate recommendations made on housing and support needs.	Local Housing Office(s)
<u>Ensure data relating to EDCI considerations is available</u> ; to those involved in rehousing support, via safe and secure rehousing tracking documents.	Ongoing	Up to date records will be kept and monitored through a Rehousing Tracker and this information will be used for future engagement.	Helen Gibson / Madeline Edwards

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
<u>Establish EDCI rehousing project controls</u> ; use Program Risk Register to ensure consideration and support levels are reviewed and confirmed as adequate throughout delivery.	Early-November 2023 and ongoing	Entry added to the Risk Register. EDCI considerations are periodically monitored and continuously reviewed alongside standard risk assessment activities with issues being monitored, tracked and reported upon until resolution.	Helen Gibson / Jamie Sampler
<u>Regularly review and update the approach to communication</u> ; which will detail key milestones, identified content and relevant audiences alongside planned delivery dates.	ongoing	Communications requirements are monitored through specialist representation within the rehousing project team, with communication continually refined to meet internal and external customer needs.	Ian Montgomery / Helen Gibson
<u>Agreement of a rehousing lettings process</u> ; which defines support mechanisms, allowances and reasonable considerations to minimise the disruption of family networks, social loss and meeting agreed resident's rehousing preferences where possible.	Sept/October	Lettings support agreed for the rehousing commencement with consideration given to minimising social loss, and supportive methods to meet the lettings preferences of residents / leaseholders wherever possible	Vicki Hooper / Kath Bramall
<u>Right-to-buy protection as appropriate</u> ; to ensure that	End-September / ongoing	Full assessment completed of allowances to ensure that	Home Ownership Team

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
current discounts are protected and progress to the residents' new tenancies, in line with LCC policies and eligibility criteria.		residents allowances are unaffected and progress to their new tenancies correctly.	
<u>Establishment of direct lettings statuses and 'band A' housing priority on residents housing applications</u> ; to remove any blocking factors which may delay or impede rehousing progress / efficiencies.	From 1 November 2023	Direct let statuses and 'band A' are in place.	Local Housing Office / Voids Team
<u>Site security provision(s)</u> ; to minimise anti-social behaviour within the blocks and dwellings as site occupancy decreases.	Ongoing	Local safety is kept under review, and consideration of static or mobile security presence as needed, to minimise anti-social behaviour.	Strategy & Investment and Housing Management working with Leeds Watch/ CEL
<u>Nearby residents and stakeholders communication(s)</u> ; agreement of key messages and communication mechanism(s) to share with residents within the locale.	Mid-November	Residents and stakeholders are engaged on known plans, and future planned milestones.	Ian Montgomery / Roisin Donnelly
<u>Provide additional support for vulnerable residents</u> ; ensuring that staffing resources are available to support residents	Ongoing	Appropriate representation occurs at regular rehousing project meetings to ensure	Mandy Sawyer / Madeline Edwards / Helen Gibson

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
to make a housing application and progress the rehousing process.		<p>support requirements are met rapidly.</p> <p>Vulnerable residents are enabled and supported throughout the rehousing application and moving process.</p>	

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job title	Date
Helen Jackson	Head of Business Development & Housing Projects	20/09/2023
Date impact assessment completed		August-September 2023

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or a **Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality impact assessment should be attached as an appendix to the decision-making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality impact assessments that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached assessment was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent: 20 Sept 2023
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent:

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 2023

PRESENT: Councillor J Lewis in the Chair

Councillors S Arif, D Coupar, M Harland,
H Hayden, A Lamb, J Lennox, J Pryor,
M Rafique and F Venner

49 HOUSING

Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange

The Director of Communities, Housing and Environment submitted a report regarding the future of six high rise blocks within the Council's housing estate. The report noted that as significant investment work would be needed to ensure the long term future of the blocks, including intrusive and costly strengthening works, an options appraisal had been undertaken. The report presented the recommendations arising from that appraisal, which were for all residents to be rehoused, with appropriate support for those who needed it, and for subsequent demolition to clear the sites. The report noted that this would enable the development of new modern housing in the future on the sites, whether by the Council or other parties.

By way of introduction to the report, the Executive Member provided an overview of the key points within the report including the options appraisal work that had taken place and the recommended next steps.

In considering enquiries regarding the potential impact that the proposals may have upon the current demand for social housing and also regarding the potential future use of the sites, it was acknowledged that whilst there may be a short term pressure on demand as a result of the proposal, it was felt that this would be manageable as part of the Council's wider social housing estate. It was also noted that the ultimate aim of the proposals was to increase the number of social housing units available in Leeds for the longer term and also to deliver a beneficial outcome for the current residents of those blocks. Furthermore, it was noted that the considerable timeframes involved in the delivery of the proposals were with the aim of ensuring that a managed approach was taken, and that liaison with partners on the opportunities regarding the future use of the sites would be ongoing. In response to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further detail on the consultation and engagement processes which have taken place with residents of the blocks to date.

As part of the discussion, a Member acknowledged that whilst action was needed and that refurbishment of the blocks was not a viable option, they confirmed that they could not support the recommendations without further assurance around the future plans for the sites, or that all residents were supportive of the proposals, and as such, recommended a deferral so that further detail could be obtained. In response, further information was provided on the timeframes involved and the reasons for the proposed actions, with it being reiterated that the intention was to deliver a greater number of social housing units on these sites in the longer term. It was undertaken that further information on such matters could be provided to the Member in question, if required.

Following consideration of appendix C to the submitted report designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the public part of the meeting, it was

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 22nd November, 2023

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the rehousing of residents of secure tenanted flats in the blocks (Bailey Towers, Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leafield Towers, Raynville Court and Raynville Grange), be approved, and that approval be given for Home Loss and Disturbance payments to be made to qualifying residents; with this resolution being supported by ongoing engagement with residents during implementation;
- (b) That approval be given for the awarding of 'Band A' housing priority and direct let status to tenants of the blocks;
- (c) That the suspension of lettings to the flats and garages be approved, with any void properties being taken out of charge;
- (d) That approval be given for the negotiation and undertaking of the re-purchasing of any leasehold flats, with approval also being given for compulsory purchase to be pursued if a voluntary approach is unsuccessful;
- (e) That it be agreed that the buildings should be safely demolished, creating clear sites;
- (f) That it be noted that activity will be progressed to explore options for the sites - for example, for development by the Council, or with other parties, or for sale;
- (g) That spend of £5,267,600 from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, be authorised, to deliver rehousing and building emptying activity; and
- (h) That agreement be given for the Initial Demolition Notices and Final Demolition Notices to be served by the Council at the appropriate times.

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillor Lamb required it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

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Briefing Note for Scrutiny Board 6 November 2023	
To:	Members of Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)
From:	Director of Communities Housing and Environment
Date:	6th November 2023

Introduction and Purpose

The paper responds to the Call-In received on 27 October 2023 in relation to the Executive Board decision taken on 18 October 2023. The decision relates to the “Future of six high rise and resident rehousing - Bailey and Brooklands Towers, Ramshead Heights, Leaffield Towers, Raynville Court and Grange”. The paper addresses each point raised in the Call-In request.

Main Issues

- 1. Whilst the report notes consultation and engagement with residents, it does not include a full breakdown of the views of residents about the proposals. We think this should be presented more clearly, along with greater detail on the numbers consulted and number of responses, in order to gauge whether the current proposals have the wide support of existing residents.***

Resident/Leaseholder Engagement:

As at the beginning of September, across the 6 blocks, we have spoken with just under 80% of households. The below is a further breakdown of what is included in para 41 of the Exec Board Report.

It may not be possible to achieve 100% confirmation of engagement with all residents prior to rehousing. However, we will continue working to make sure that all residents have been engaged with and are aware of the support available.

Block	Households engaged with	Total households (Excl voids)	Percentage	Outstanding
Brookland Towers	51	54	94%	3
Bailey Towers	52	58	90%	6
Ramshead Heights	28	60	47%	32
Raynville Court	51	59	86%	8
Raynville Grange	41	56	73%	15
Leaffield Towers	45	58	78%	13
	268	345		77

22%

Total percentage engaged	78%
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How we tried to maximise engagement:

It should be noted that we raised awareness of opportunities to engage with us via letters, posters, e-mails and texts. We offered drop-in sessions held on site at the residents’ blocks (3

per block, evenings, day times and weekends), bookable appointments in their own homes, telephone appointments along with large print, braille and translations services as required.

Following the advertised engagement sessions, we continue to review those who we have yet to speak to, about the future of the blocks and sought individual contact based on any known information - such as via an interpreter, or through an advocate.

How we try and ensure engagement is meaningful:

Data collected from the consultation and engagement outreach sessions has been analysed and thematised, points arising in relation to equality characteristics requirements have been fully considered (*for example engaging with residents from 210 properties resulted in data being collected on declarations of 13 caring responsibilities, 26 physical disabilities and 13 mental health impairments*).

All identified needs are recorded on the project tracker to ensure that individual needs are taken into account and continually met throughout the rehousing project.

Support or opposition for the current proposals from existing residents:

It should be noted that the engagement sessions mainly focussed on sharing the facts about what was being proposed with our residents and answering any specific questions, with a strong emphasis on our residents' well-being, identifying any support requirements that people may want, any preferences for areas and or bedroom numbers / property type etc.

The overall resident response to engagement was positive in that some residents did express a sadness of having to move, but most residents understand the requirement to invest in the blocks to provide better quality homes. Some residents did, however offer particularly strong views about the proposals, and as at the end of September, the information shows that 29 residents (8%) were anxious or unhappy with having to move.

One in five residents are currently actively seeking rehousing with a housing application already in place. The engagement has also helped identify those who may need additional help and support with registering their housing applications and move support.

- 2. The proposals will result in the loss of 360 units of housing, which will clearly have an impact on the housing register in the context of an already large waiting list of people needing social housing. We do not believe this factor has been sufficiently addressed in the report in terms of the explanation of options considered.***

The service has a requirement to ensure all its tenants live in good quality decent homes, the repairs required to these blocks are extensive and for this reason, whichever decision was taken at executive board, the tenants would have been asked to leave their homes, either to allow refurbishment or demolition. The loss of 360 units is unfortunate at a time when demand is high for housing and this will have a minor delay on applicants bidding for alternative homes across Leeds, however this will be done in a managed way over a 2 to 3 year period.

Tenants will of course receive 'choice' in terms of where they are re-housed within reason and based on a similar situation (the Highways blocks) no one had a possession order made and all where successfully re housed, the vast majority into council properties in an area of their choice.

All tenants will receive Band A on the housing register and also Direct Let. Officers will then work with tenants to provide support and assistance whilst alternative housing is provided

- 3. *The future of these sites is an important aspect, and whilst the report says this will be considered in detail at a later stage we believe this should have happened before beginning the process of clearing the sites. It is vital that the project does not become stalled and that desired outcomes for the sites are properly understood.***

The desired outcome is that these sites are developed to build as many replacement one and two bedroom homes as we can – but of course we need to also take into account planning policy which does significantly limit what is possible at these sites. Considering the scale of these developments, and the need to progress this work in a managed way, it is considered a sensible approach to first take a decision on the future of the existing blocks, and then consider in detail the options available to develop the sites.

To do all of that work before a decision on the future of the blocks is made would provide us with less time to progress the relocation of tenants in a managed way and would also potentially involve abortive costs.

Given the challenging financial environment we are currently working in, we do not feel it is morally or financially right to promise more than we are confident can be delivered at this point in time, until all of the future options have been fully considered.

- 4. *In terms of what happens to existing residents in the short to medium term, has sufficient consideration been given to options that would allow existing communities to be kept together during the decant process? We also think in general there has been insufficient consideration of alternative options.***

Our proposals are not to move people on a short-term basis, but to try and work with our residents to help them find a home that is suitable for them in the long term. Two thirds of residents that stated an area of choice preference across the engagement sessions, wished to remain in the local area. One in five residents are currently actively seeking rehousing with a housing application already in place.

Also, the Executive Board Paper at para 44 a) notes that the rehousing preferences in terms of preferred locations from those that expressed an opinion are that 20% of households raised that they would want to stay in the same area, whilst 9% said that they wanted to move to a different part of the city. We will know more about residents' preferences as rehousing support progresses.

Our residents will be supported to find a suitable home that suits them longer-term. They will be able to bid on other RSL properties, and Leeds City Council properties. They are also able to move into any private property or with others (i.e. family) and still receive a Homeloss payment if eligible.

Unfortunately, doing nothing is not an option considering the nature of the blocks and their projected lifespan. Whether refurbishment or demolition was considered, residents would need to be moved out. All options for the future of the sites will be and are being considered. These options are being explored in parallel with this project (i.e. the project to empty and demolish) and we are not waiting for residents to be moved out to commence this.

5. ***We also have concerns about the potential negative impact on the Housing Revenue Account. This decision may place unsustainable strain on the HRA as funds will need to be borrowed for capital purposes, while at the same time inward revenue flows will be squeezed, while dwelling numbers are reduced throughout the construction cycles of whatever types of property are subsequently built, for however long that takes, the effects possibly lasting years. We would ask that the decision is reconsidered in light of the above concerns.***

As per the Executive Board Report (paragraph 54), an approximate net loss of income per year of approximately £80,000 per block has been estimated for every year that sites are not developed from when buildings are empty (for example accounting for rent loss but also for savings from maintenance including repairs) – for six blocks this would be £480,000 per year.

As stated in the Executive Board Report, these blocks do currently meet all required safety standards, however these will change over time, and this is important to plan for. We will be required to submit a safety case for each of our high rise blocks by March 2024, and without a clear robust plan for future investment (which we have appraised and is not financially or technically viable) we are at risk of an occupancy certificate not being granted. Not being granted a certificate would result in immediate decant of all occupants. For clarity, we need to submit a safety case either way, but if the plan is to demolish, then the requirements is to ensure that we will maintain safety throughout the managed decline until the buildings are emptied and demolished (i.e. maintained, but not improved). If we have no decision in place to demolish, then we need to be able to evidence and demonstrate the investment that will be taking place in these blocks.

If we did not put plans in place to help support people into new homes, the immediate investment needs, just to meet minimum safety standards, excluding structural upgrades, that would have to be carried out are estimated to be circa £4.2m across the 6 blocks. This would then be abortive spend as any longer-term decision to invest (via full structural refurbishment or demolition and exploration of future use of site) would then ultimately need to be progressed.

PRN	Block	Est Cost	
22340	Bailey Towers	£	880,800.00
9976	Leafield Towers	£	856,075.00
22354	Brooklands Towers	£	857,050.00
22409	Ramshead Heights	£	525,800.00
46456	Raynville Court	£	521,525.00
46469	Raynville Grange	£	512,400.00
	TOTAL		4,153,650.00

So while the proposal does put a strain on the HRA, trying to keep people living in these properties given the known issues with the blocks (including water ingress for example) would also put significant pressure on HRA budgets. This could be through incurring costs on the immediate investment needs, including things such as potential for disrepair claims, high void costs or lengthy works times. Also, any back-and-forth negotiation on the building safety case would incur a fee for each letter/correspondence with the RSH.

The number of residents eligible for home loss payments is likely to increase over time, and the amount each eligible person would be entitled to will also increase over time (it is currently approx. £8,100 each, was circa £7,800 last year as an example).